



"The Review" Office of Child Fatality Review

Recognize Warning Signs. Prevent Youth Suicide!

(Excerpt from interview with Dr. David Shaffer, director of child and adolescent psychology at Columbia University, and a leading expert on suicidal behavior)

Q: At what age do people begin to have suicidal thoughts?

A: We don't have a lot of information about the frequency in pre-high school kids, but I think that suicidal thoughts probably begin just before puberty or around puberty. Although you do get very young kids saying that they wished they were dead or that they are going to kill themselves, it's very rare for them to act on those thoughts.

Q: What prompts this type of suicidal thinking? Do these thoughts often lead to suicide attempts?

A: There are kids who say it just for effect, and kids who say it when they're feeling low, and kids who say it and they really mean it. Because it's so common, it's not necessarily very indicative of what's going on underneath. Attempts are very common, and in depressed kids, you'll have about 40-50% who think about it.

Q: Who is most at risk for committing suicide?

A: Older teenagers are more likely to commit suicide than younger children, and boys more than girls. A family history of suicide may also be important. Kids at greatest risk are impulsive, lose their temper quickly, are prone to very extreme emotions and may also have some history of substance abuse or depression.



CFR Ideas for Prevention Opportunities! Do a little or do a lot;

every little bit helps!

April 2006:

- *Alcohol Awareness Month*

Take the time to educate your teens on the dangers of alcohol abuse

- *National Child Abuse Prevention Month*

Help new parents cope with a crying baby by offering respite care and support

- *National Youth Sports Safety Month*

Educate young children on the benefits of wearing protective equipment while playing sports (i.e. bicycle helmets, knee and elbow pads for inline skates)

- *National Youth Violence Prevention Week (April 3-7)*

Help kids manage anger and aggression by offering creative stress relief outlets and reducing access to weapons

- *National Public Health Week (April 3-9)*

- *National Playground Safety Week (April 24-28)*

May 2006:

- *National Bike Month*

Help kids ride safely by teaching them the rules of the road and to use reflective clothing and gear

- *National SAFE KIDS Week (May 6-13)*

- *National Safe Boating Week (May 20-26)*

- *Buckle Up! America Week (May 22-29)*

June 2006:

- *Fireworks Safety Month*

- *Home Safety Month*

Please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/injobsrv.htm> for more information and ideas

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Child Abuse Prevention Points to Remember

Submitted by Pam Brown, Director of Programs, Prevent Child Abuse Georgia (edited)

Throughout April, communities all over the U.S. will participate in activities for Child Abuse Prevention Month. Most activities will raise awareness about the occurrence of child abuse; we will hear lots of numbers and statistics about this problem. We will spend a lot of time talking about the problem: how to recognize abuse, what to do when we suspect it, and how to intervene and treat families and children whose lives are affected by child maltreatment. Why not focus on the more than 130,000 new babies who are born in our state yearly, beginning their lives with hope and promise, and who are the future of our communities? The primary responsibility for these children belong to their parents, but often parents can't do it alone. All families benefit from the help of strong, supportive neighborhoods and communities. That means us—all of us. Child abuse is preventable. Every one of us is responsible for the children in our communities. Every one of us is part of the solution for child abuse. Every one of us has the power of prevention.

Prevention means:

- A nurturing home environment
- Safe neighborhoods with places to play and experience positive social and recreational activities
- Good medical care
- Stimulating and effective schools in partnership with communities
- Faith communities who reach out to families and help provide networks of support and care

What you can do:

- Know your neighbors and watch out for the children in your neighborhood. Help make your neighborhood a place where folks look out for one another, and support one another
- Educate yourself and share information with others. Learn where parenting support and information are available
- Reach out to the children in your community. A smile or a word of encouragement means a lot
- Advocate for policies and programs that support children and families and help them to be resilient and strong

A great example of prevention in action came from the Prevent Child Abuse Georgia HELPLINE (1-800-CHILDREN). Mary called the first time, full of emotion, confusion and frustration. She was 17 and struggling with a nine-month-old baby (Stephen) who was picky about his food and cried all the time. Mary lived with the baby's father (David) in a small room of her mother's house. Mary wanted to finish high school and get a job, and though David had a job, they could not afford day care. The baby slept in the bed with her because that was the only way she could get him to stop crying. The HELPLINE praised Mary for taking the initiative to reach out for support, sent her literature about crying and infant care, and arranged for a follow-up call in a few days. The HELPLINE also provided referrals to some parent support groups in Mary's area and talked to her about self-care and to consider support for her and David's relationship. Follow-up calls revealed that Stephen was crying less and on a more regular sleep schedule in his own bed, and Mary and David worked to control their anger and not fight in front of the baby. In a few months, she progressed from being an overwhelmed mother to someone with better coping strategies and a strong determination to improve her home envi-

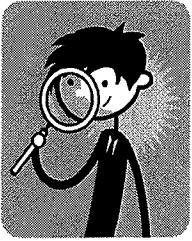
“Welcome” to our newest Program Manager, Tamara Hurst!

CFR would like to offer congratulations and best wishes to Program Manager Carri Cottengim, who left the Office in February to be a full-time mom for her new daughter, Taylor. She was a wonderful team member and worked tirelessly to help county committees and child advocates across the state. We will miss her.

In March, Tamara Hurst joined our staff. Tamara received her Bachelor's and Master's in Social Work from Georgia State University with a concentration in community partnerships. Trained as a forensic social worker and advocating for the seriously mentally ill in the criminal justice system, she witnessed first-hand the devastating long term effects of child abuse and neglect. The position as program manager with the Office of Child Fatality Review presented an excellent opportunity to partner with a myriad of agencies to break the cycle of child abuse. She worked throughout

Georgia in her previous job and is looking forward to traveling to some of the same counties to conduct Child Fatality Review trainings and Coroner trainings. Her long term goal is to get to know the names of all of the committee members in her area. In June, Tamara will also begin work with the Child Advocacy Center for Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, as a member of their Child Protection Team. She will work with children who arrive in the emergency room with child abuse or neglect issues. Tamara is married with 3 children, 1 grandchild and 2 dogs. Her hobbies include golf and cooking.





Child Fatality Investigation Teams

Submitted by Rachelle Carnesale, Director of CFIT (edited)

The Georgia Child Fatality Investigation Program exists to develop, train and support multi-disciplinary child death investigation teams around the state. Founded on the premise that early communication between all of the agencies who will have some role in investigating a child's death fosters better quality results, the program encourages multi-disciplinary participation from the inception of a case. Model protocols, training and case consultation are available through the program. The pilot program began in 1998, but due to turnover in some of the involved agencies, some of the pilot programs are no longer functioning pursuant to their protocols. In 2006, the program will prioritize working with teams from the pilot program in addition to the new teams, to ensure their continued vitality. CFIT-specific trainings will be offered during the CFR committee trainings between April and June. For more information, contact CFIT Director Rachelle Carnesale at 770-490-2112, or racarnesale@dhr.state.ga.us.

The success stories of Georgia's counties

Congratulations to these counties for 100% compliance (to date) in submitting reports for 2005 child deaths. All of your reports are in, and we applaud the work that you have done!

- Camden; Candler; Cherokee; Clinch; Coffee; Colquitt; Crawford; Evans; Elbert; Emanuel; Fannin; Gilmer; Grady; Greene; Habersham; Haralson; Hart; Harris; Jenkins; Long; Madison; Marion; McDuffie; Miller; Mitchell; Monroe; Morgan; Pike; Thomas; Towns; Wilcox; and Wilkes. *Thank you for your efforts!!*

Georgia Child Welfare Legislation 2006

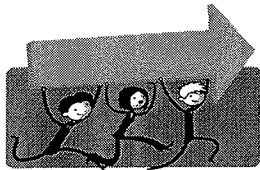
On Monday, March 13, 2006, the Georgia General Assembly entered their 30th day, traditionally known as "Crossover Day". House bills which were not passed before this day were not eligible to be reviewed by the Senate, and Senate bills which were not passed before this day were not eligible to be reviewed by the House. *The following bills had not passed out of their chamber, and were no longer available for review.*

- **HB 1239:** requiring local boards of education to provide mandatory instruction on criminal laws that affect minors for students in grades 6, 8, and 10, with emphasis on crimes in which the juvenile can be tried as an adult.
- **HB 1309:** allowance for a special license plate to provide partial revenues foster parents in Georgia.
- **HB 1407:** adds homicide by vehicle to the legislation known as SB 440, which would allow juveniles to be prosecuted as adults in Superior Court for this offense.

- **SB 488:** requires the clerk of the court to notify DFCS within 72 hours whenever a person is convicted of the offense of endangering a child by driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

The following bills were still active by Crossover Day, and awaiting consideration by the necessary chambers.

- **HB 1092:** to create a suicide prevention program within DHR, and to provide investigation protocols, training, screening tools and education.
- **HR 1266:** to extend the 2005 study committee on children ages birth through 5 years.
- **SB 442:** to amend the mandatory reporter statute to require immediate reporting for mandated reporters, with "immediately" defined as "no later than 24 hours from the time the reasonable suspicion of abuse arose". The bill also restricts organizations such as schools or hospitals from modifying the reports of their employees or the primary reporters based on internal protocols.



Do you want to let others know about your successful investigation or prevention efforts? Take the time to educate all of us and send a short story about activities, events and programs in your county. We want to recognize all of your hard work in the next newsletter. We look forward to hearing from you!

**Together
Everyone
Achieves
More**

Please submit your county's stories of success or other ideas by **June 12, 2006** to:
The Office of Child Fatality Review • 506 Roswell Street, Suite 230 • Marietta, Georgia 30060
Phone: (770)528-3988 • Fax: (770)528-3989
araheem@dhr.state.ga.us (Arleymah Raheem) or tamara_hu@bellsouth.net (Tamara Hurst)

Upcoming Events

- **April 11-13, 2006:** Building Successful Teams conference will be held at the Renaissance Waverly hotel in Atlanta. Please register at <http://dhr.georgia.gov/portal/site/DHR-OHRMD>.
- Coroner Trainings for 2006-2007 are now posted on the Georgia Coroners Association website at www.georgiacoronersassoc.org.
- Child Passenger Safety Technician Training will be offered by GTIPI on the following dates: April 5-6, April 12-13, May 4-5, May 11-12, June 27-30. Please visit www.ridesafegeorgia.org for more information.
- **April 27, 2006:** Georgia SIDS Alliance will host their Grief, Grieving and Grief Support conference at Clayton State University. Please visit their website at www.sidsga.org for more information.
- **July 9-11, 2006:** Prevent Child Abuse Georgia will host their 22nd Annual Symposium on child abuse prevention and treatment at the Crowne Plaza Ravinia in Atlanta. Please visit their website at www.preventchildabusega.org for more information.
- **July 16-19, 2006:** Prosecuting Attorney Council of Georgia will host their 2006 Summer Conference at the Jekyll Island Convention Center. Please visit their website at www.pacga.org for more information.

CFR Deadlines and Timelines

- **April—June 2006:** regional training sessions for all CFR committee members. This is required for all CFR members, so please visit our website at www.gacfr.dhr.georgia.gov to find the registration form training calendar.
- **July 1:** due date to submit your county Child Abuse Protocol annual report and your county Child Fatality Review committee annual report. Please contact the Office if you have any questions or concerns.
- **July 31:** last day to submit your 2005 child death reports using the online system. Forms are available at www.gacfr.dhr.georgia.gov. We had a **99% compliance rate** for 2004 child death reports, and we are aiming for 100% this year! Please contact the Office if you are having trouble submitting reports.

***** If you are receiving this newsletter but are no longer a member of your local Child Fatality Review committee, please contact our office in order to remove yourself from the list*****



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In an effort to facilitate information sharing, we have developed this newsletter to bring us closer. Knowing that our goal is the protection of children and the prevention of child deaths, we want to include your experiences and ideas to improve the quality of services we provide. Please contact us with any suggestions on how to make the Office of Child Fatality Review process helpful to you.

Go Team!